

REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **20 September 2005**, the Examiner reviewed claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, and 17-21. Claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, and 17-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Meffert et al (USPub 2002/0059144, hereinafter "Meffert") in view of Liu (USPub 2002/0143710, hereinafter "Liu").

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Independent claims 1, 8 and 15 were rejected as being unpatentable over Meffert in view of Liu.

Applicant respectfully points out that the combined invention of Meffert and Liu is directed towards **securely transmitting a message** from a sender to a recipient. Specifically, Meffert teaches a method for implementing a PKI-based encryption between a sender and a recipient (see Meffert, Abstract). The invention of Liu allows a sender to obtain irrefutable proof that a recipient received a message (see Liu, paragraph [0034]). Liu also teaches how to prevent the sender from fooling the recipient into sending a signed receipt (see Liu, paragraph [0045]-[0047]). However, the combined invention of Meffert and Liu does not teach how to prevent a sender from denying that he/she sent a message in the first place. Note that if the recipient performs certain actions in reliance of the fact that the sender sent a message, it is critical to enable the system to prove that the sender sent the message, regardless of whether the recipient sent a signed receipt or not. For example, this capability can be very important when there is a contract dispute between the sender and the recipient.

In contrast, the present invention is specifically directed towards **enabling a database system to prove** that (i) a sender sent a message and (ii) a recipient received the message (see page 2, paragraph [0005]). Specifically, the database system **persistently stores a signed message digest** with the message (see page 3,

paragraph [0008], page 9, paragraph [0034], page 10, paragraph [0038]). Note that this signed message digest can be used by the database system later to prove that the sender sent the message.

There is nothing within Meffert or Liu, either explicit or implicit, which suggests enabling a database system to prove that a sender sent a message, thereby preventing the sender from denying that he/she sent the message.

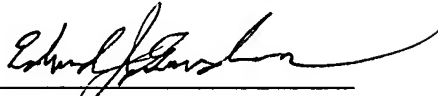
Accordingly, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15 to clarify that the present invention is directed towards enabling a database system to prove that an origin system sent a message. Specifically, the present invention persistently stores a signed message digest with the message, which enables the database system to present proof later that the origin system sent the message. Applicant has added new dependent claims 22, 23, and 24, which depend upon claims 1, 8, and 15, respectively, to clarify that the present invention can also enable a database system to prove that the recipient requested to receive the message. These amendments find support in paragraphs [0005], [0008]-[0009], [0032]-[0035], and [0038] of the instant application. Further, dependent claims 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, and 20 have been amended to correct antecedent basis.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 8 and 15 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 3-7 and 22, which depend upon claim 1, claims 10-14 and 23, which depend upon claim 8, and claims 17-21 and 24, which depend upon claim 15, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Edward J. Grundler
Registration No. 47,615

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Edward J. Grundler
PARK, VAUGHAN & FLEMING LLP
2820 Fifth Street
Davis, CA 95616-7759
Tel: (530) 759-1663
FAX: (530) 759-1665
Email: edward@parklegal.com